



[NUMBER 2,164.]

THE ANTICS OF JACKIE AND SAMMY, THE TWINS, AND UNCLE TOM, THE MENAGERIE MAN

[NOVEMBER 7, 1931.]



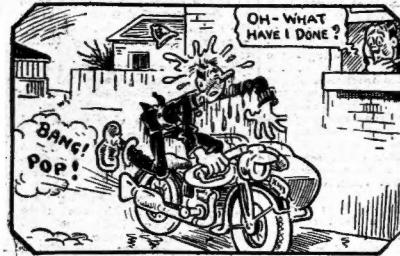
1. "Hooray! Hooray! It's firework day!" chirped the twins in double-width tones. "Ah! But no noise till to-night, lads!" tooted Uncle Tom. "I want a snooze." "Right-ho, unk!" hisped Jackie and Sammy. "We won't breathe aloud!"



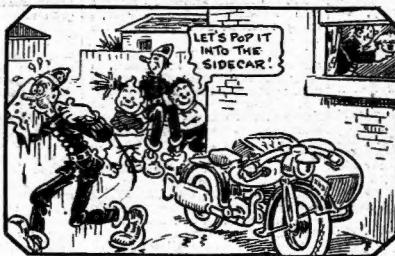
2. But no sooner had the merry old zoo-minder settled down to slide into slumberland than the pieces of peace was punctured in about seventeen different places. Bang! Zimp! Pop! "Ow! They've started their fireworks already!" yelped Tom.



3. "And that's how they obey their old nunkie, is it? Grr! I'll teach the young raps that what I say goes!" Whereupon he grabbed up a bucket of dampness and taught that to go, too—straight through the window! "Hold that!" he yuffed.



4. "That'll stop your fireworks!" But as a matter of fact it stopped old Policeman Fairyfoot's features, 'cos they happened to be coming along—complete with Fairy—just outside! "Corks! It wasn't fireworks after all!" gasped old Tom.



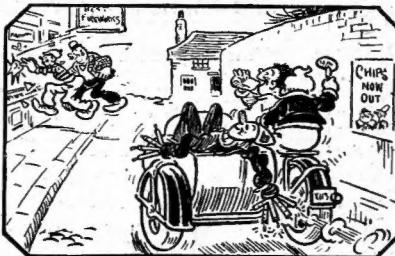
5. "It was that old blaster-bike of Fairy's. What a noise!" "Owah! Gog-uggle!" spluttered Fairy. "I'm naked!" snorted the pride of the bobby brigade, as he flopped off to have his collar-stud dry-cleaned. "It annoys me no end, it does!"



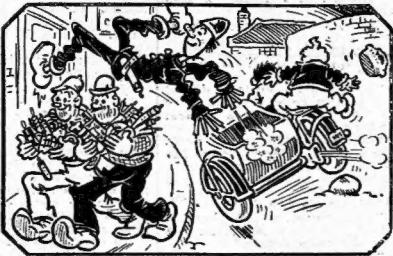
6. Now Jackie and Sammy shuffled up with a lifelike guy of Fairy just then, and when the old zo-o-minder popped out of the window again with a pin he thought it was his police pal. "Sorry I soaked you, Fairy!" he clucked. "Take this!"



7. "Ta muchly, nunkie," chirped Sammy. "Now we can have a blow-out as well as a bang! He'll be his wimpy squibs!" "Yes. Our gun forks out!" hooted Jackie. "Hey! Bring that pie back—it's not for you, you scallawags!" hooted Tom.



8. "Beg pudden, unk, but we like pie!" chuckled the twins as they rode into nice buzz-off. Only just ahead there happened to be a brace of bad lads breaking into a firework shop. "We'll make things go with a bang!" they yammered.



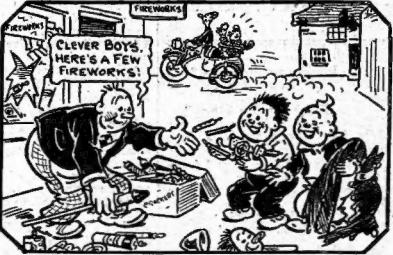
9. But something else was going with a bang. Yes. The exhaust pipe of the motor-bike was blowing out "reports" about itself, and just as a spark from this set fire to the squibs in that guy, Jackie made the deadlads feel upset by going over a stone.



10. "Coy! Our guy's done a guy!" smirked Sammy. "Ay! It's fallen out!" "With Jackie?" And by this lousy time those chaps are falling out with it, too!" For no sooner did the guy of Fairy fall on the firework scrumpers than off went the squibs—



11. Which the motor-bike's exhaust had warmed up. Bang! Pop! Crash! Korrash! they went. "Yow-wow! Hellup! Stop shooting at us, Master Pleeceman!" yowled the bad lads. "W-w-well come quietly if you ded-ded-don't shoot again!"



12. "Well, pickle my chin-strap in treacle!" clucked Fairy, bowing up then. "You've caught a couple of bad lads, kids. I shall get promotion for this!" And these lads shall have some fireworks!" quoth the shopkeeper. So all was swish!

A THRILLING COMPLETE STORY OF DIGBY GRANT, THE FAMOUS DETECTIVE.



They tell all the latest jokes.

"L ATE again?" "Why do you look at me like that?"

"When I do it spells trouble."

"What about it? Anybody can spell trouble."

"Well, perhaps so—but can you spell soup?"

"S-o-u-p-p."

"Here, how many 'p's' in soup?"

"Well, I don't know for sure, but my ma used to put a pennyworth in."

"My word, you do remind me of Sam Soft."

"But I haven't got a face like his."

"No, but you're soft."

"Thanks. But I say, you are like Felix Workinx!"

"Not a bit. He's fair and I'm dark."

"Yes; and he owes me five bob, and you are like him because you owe me five bob, too."

"Ha, ha! That's a rich joke."

"I wish I was."

"All the same, know the best way to catch rabbits."

"Share the secret."

"Seasy. Just sit behind a hedge and make a noise like a lettuce leaf."

"Go on! You can't catch rabbits that way."

"Perhaps you are right—but I caught you, you old freak!"

"Silly parrot!"

"That's not so rude as you think. A bird is a clever bird. It is the only duck duck that can talk."

"Don't you believe it. The peacock can talk."

"That's not true."

"Tis. It can unfold a fine 'tail,' can't it?"

"I'm told you're a bit of a fibber."

"Well, I can do more things better than most men. I'll wager you can't tell me anything you can't do that I couldn't do myself."

"Well, I can't pay my bills, and I'm delighted to hear that you can, old fruit."

"H'm. I take back what I said. Please don't remember it."

"Some people can't remember things. Their memory is destroyed, and I know what does it."

"What destroys memory? Smoking?"

"Neither. It's lending a man money."

"Here, are you being rude at me?"

"Oh, no, fair sir!"

"How dare you address me like that?"

"Well, how I'd like to be dressed would like to do that. How would you like to spend all your winter in a bathing-dress and all the summer in a fur coat?"

"Of course. But everybody would like to do that. How would you like to spend all your winter in a bathing-dress and all the summer in a fur coat?"

"I'm, really does that?"

"You mistake. A moth does."

"I'd give you a shilling for that joke if I had a shilling."

"And if you gave it to me it would be a bad one, I guess."

"Ah, shillings don't go far these days!"

"Of course they do. Just as far as they used to in our grandfather's time."

"Oh, dear no!"

"If you don't believe me, pop it in an envelope and sell it by post. It will go quite as far."

"How many letters are there in money?"

"Easy. There are five letters."

"Then how is it if you take two letters from money you only have one left?"

"That I cannot tell. But I know a chap who took money from two letters and he didn't get anything left."

"Oh, what did he get?"

"Two months in prison."

## The Peril at Ten

**C**LANG! Clang! Clang! As the unmistakable sound of a fire-bell rang out, Digby Grant reluctantly slowed down the car he was driving and drew in to the kerb.

A moment later the thunder of the heavy motor fire-engine's wheels broke out on the cobble-stoned road, and with the insistent note of its big brass bell echoing harshly between the houses on either side of the street it roared its way past the Scotland Yard detective's car.

"Wonder where the fire is?" said Sam Smart, Grant's youthful assistant.

"Not more than a street or two away," replied Grant, whose sharp eye had detected a cloud of smoke rising against the black night sky some distance ahead. "We'll go and see what it is."

It turned out to be a small, old-fashioned house at the corner of a dingy little street, and by the time Digby Grant and Sam had succeeded in thrusting their way through the dense crowd of onlookers the top of the building was a veritable furnace.

"Everybody out, officer?" asked Grant of a burly policeman who was striving to hold back the swaying crowd.

"Nobdy's lived in the place for a year," was the short reply.

Grant nodded. Then, accompanied by Sam, he made his way round to the side of the house to view the back of it.

"A real sizzler, isn't it?" remarked Sam.

Before Grant could reply, an alarming thing happened.

From out of a small upper window in the side of the burning house flew an object, and as it crashed down almost at Grant's feet the astonished detective saw that it was a small wooden stool.

"Gosh! What did that happen?" gasped Sam, in astonishment.

"I'm going to find out!" replied Grant grimly.

By this young assistant could make any further comment, Digby Grant made a dash round to the front. Then, ignoring the warning shouts of the firemen and police, he dived through the open front door.

A rickety flight of stairs faced him, and without hesitation he bounded up them.

Lurid tongues of flame licked greedily about his legs and hands, volleys of dense black smoke writhed about him till his senses reeled. But a bright blaze momentarily dispersed the smoke before him, and in that brief instant the detective saw a door.

Plunging through the flames, he hurled himself at it. It gave under his weight, and as he staggered into the small attic-like apartment, he saw an astonishing sight.

An overturned table lay blazing furiously on the floor with the skeleton remains of what had once been a large oil-lamp beside it. And there, in the centre of the blazing inferno lay the figure of a man, bound and gagged.

The floorboards around him were a mass of leaping hissing flames, and as Grant plunged through the fire towards him the man's eyes flickered open for a brief instant.

Snatching him up from the blazing boards, Grant swiftly whipped off his greasy cloth tie and freed his mouth.

"It's all right; I've got you safe now," he cried.

"Too—too late—" gasped the other weakly. "The—the Santa Marco—ten o'clock! They—"

But here his last remaining vestige of strength gave out. With a groan his head sank on to his chest, and he drooped limp in Grant's arms.

He was a man of heavy build, and it required all Grant's strength to drag him across to the open door. But here he found himself faced with an impenetrable barrier of smoking flames.

Seeing that way of escape was cut off, Grant staggered with his burden across the room to the window. The glass had long since been broken by the intense heat, and, leaning through the shoulder,



In the midst of the roaring angry flames lay a man, bound and gagged.

... by somebody who is going to do something aboard his tug, the Santa Marco, to-night. Ten o'clock was the hour named—and hark—

"He broke off abruptly, listening intently at the chimes of a distant clock floated faintly but clearly over the oily expanse of water before them.

"Ten o'clock!" bresched Sam.

"Yes. We haven't a moment to lose!" exclaimed Grant, breaking into a run. "This is Draker's Wharf just ahead!"

There were several barges and one or two small boats moored to the big wooden piles which thrust their heads above the calm waters, like grim sentinels of the night.

But of a tug there was no sign at first. Then suddenly the fuzzy chug-chug-chugging sound of a tug broke upon the soft lapping of water against the wharfe.

A moment later a small steam tug came into view. One thing about it instantly struck Grant as being suspicious. Not a single light showed on the vessel as it nosed its way through the other craft, and just behind it was a motor-launch in which two figures could dimly be seen.

Then, as Grant and Sam eagerly watched, from the deep shadows they saw the man who had been steering the tug suddenly leave the wheel and take a flying leap into the following motor-boat.

And even as this astonishing act took place, the port-light of another vessel gleamed for a brief instant on the passing tug's bows.

It was the Santa Marco.

"What's their game, guv'nor?"

"I've got to find that out," replied the detective grimly. "That tug hasn't been deserted for nothing. You keep a watch on those birds in the motor-boat. Sam. I must board the Santa Marco!"

Breaking from the shadows, Digby Grant raced as fast as he could along to where he had seen the long arm of a crane jutting out over the water.

With the agility of a trained athlete, he hopped up onto the big iron girder supporting the crane arm. Then, scrambling up on to the arm itself, he swiftly made his way along to the very end of it.

"Excuse me," he said, "but do you know a boat named the Santa Marco?"

"Santa Marco?" repeated the old seaman, screwing up his weather-beaten face thoughtfully. "Why?"

"He said, after a pause. "That's old Ben Davis' tug. It's down by Draker's Wharf."

"Thanks," said Grant. "And what's Ben Davis like? Is he—heavily built, with close-cropped hair and a scar over his left eye?"

"That's right; that's old Ben," replied the other.

"Ah! Then I know him," nodded the detective. "Thanks! Good night!"

With that he turned and hurried away into the gloom with Sam Smart at his side.

"Was that Ben Davis you rescued from the fire?" asked Sam as they plunged into the dark, dank-smelling alleys.

"Yes," answered Grant, "he must be world-famous comic for so many years.

He was not a moment too soon, for the Santa Marco was already passing, its engine still chugging even as it blindly made its way down the river.

With a daring leap, Grant left the end of the crane-arm, and the next instant he landed on the little deck at the stern of the tug.

He paused for a moment before making his way below to investigate, and as his keen gaze swept the river ahead he saw something which gave him a clue to the mystery.

Directly ahead, about fifty yards farther on, were four large ugly-looking vessels. They were oil-tankers, Grant realised. Each one probably contained several thousand gallons of oil—and the Santa Marco had obviously been directed straight at them. Why?

With a suspicion of the truth in his mind Grant gave a bound, and sprang down the short flight of wooden steps to the stuffy little cabin.

An ominous ticking sounded in the darkness, and, flashing his electric pocket-lamp about, he saw an object on the floor which made even his steel-like nerves tingle.

It was a large explosive machine, timed to explode at an appointed moment. And as Grant gazed at the clock-like dial in the top of it he saw the single hand creeping towards the red mark which would explode it.

To go to it.

Switching up the infernal machine, Grant turned and raced up the short flight of stairs. He slipped on the greasy little deck and nearly fell. But with an effort he saved himself, and staggering to the stern of the tug he hurled the vicious machine into the water.

Almost as he did so the tug gave a violent jerk as its bow ran into the first of the fleet of tankers, and as Digby Grant pitched down on to the deck a muffled explosion broke the silence of the night, sending up a column of water nearly twenty feet high.

Had the bomb remained aboard the tug the explosion would have spread to the tankers and an appalling disaster would have followed.

But the tankers were saved, and by the time the detective had managed to turn the Santa Marco about the shrill blast of a police-whistle rang out from the river bank.

It was Sam Smart, putting up a desperate fight with the three scoundrels who had just disembarked from the motor-launch.

"Stick it, Sam!" cried Grant, putting the tug straight at the wharf.

A moment later he was beside his young assistant, and after a brief fight the desperate crew were marched off by the police.

The three men had deliberately attempted to fire the fleet of oil-tankers, and Ben Davis, the tug skipper, had been made a prisoner in order that they could make use of the tug. When the crooks came up for trial later, they divulged the fact that they had been hired to do the dastardly act by the ruthless owner of a rival oil company.

And, needless to say, he, as well as the three hired crooks, got the punishment deserved.

**Digby Grant is the terror of the lawless. His adventures are the finest appearing in any paper. Every week you will find him ONLY IN COMIC CUTS.)**



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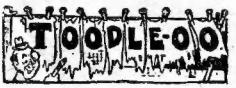
It is true that I have tried to give my readers exactly the sort of stories they like most, but I should be a fibber if I didn't tell you that I have always been greatly helped by suggestions which come from my readers.

So if there is any sort of story you would like to see in *Comic Cuts* I hope you will send me a postcard and tell me what sort of story is.

Remember that *Comic Cuts* was the very first comic, and I intend to make sure that it shall remain more popular than any other comic. That is why I am always looking for fresh tricks for my readers, though I think you will agree that in its present form it takes a lot of beating.

I would advise you not to miss one single issue of *Comic Cuts* from now, because it is going to be packed full with wonderful pictures and stabs.

Your old pal,  
CLARENCE CUTS.  
7-11-31



# Secrets of Darkmoor

**Old Michael, the Hermit of the Moor, tells the tale of THE WILD WOLF CALL.**

~~~~~

**The Needle of Rock.**

I HAVE sat in my cave in the rocks on Darkmoor and have heard the wild ponies neigh from far away. At nights I have lain and heard the owls call and the wind whine and whistle and groan like a human being.

Once when I was out on the open moor a stone burst and a thunder bolt fell from the sky and buried its way into the earth with a sudden sound that almost stopped my heart beating, and made me deaf for well over a week. That frightened me, and I shall remember it for many years to come.

But I shall never, never forget the night I was sitting by my fire in my cell with Laddie, my dog, stretched out at my side, and I heard the wolf call.

I was sure that was what it was. Once before, when I had been out in Canada in the heart of the snows, I had heard the wolves call out in wild hunger, and then and now the blood froze in my veins.

Wolves in England! I had never heard of such a thing before, and yet I was sure it was the wolf call. I had to prove it, there was Laddie quivering at the fire, the hair on his back standing up with fright, his ears back along his head, his cold nose quivering.

We listened in silence, and I must confess I jumped when my fire suddenly crackled loudly.

Then in a minute or two I heard the wolf call again.

There was no mistaking it. The wolf call is a long, high whining sound, cruel, wild, and merciless like the hungry wolves themselves.

Over the moor it came, and the noise was about to die away to silence when suddenly it altered and became savage and excited. I knew what that excited note meant; they were on the hunt.

Quickly I jumped up and got my stoutest stick, for a sudden, horrible thought had struck me. Perhaps they had hunted me out and were coming to the cave.

I hurried out along the S-shaped passage entrance to my cave anxious to see if I could see the wolves.

Outside, I found the moor bathed in moonlight, for it was a full moon, and there was not a cloud in the sky. A heavy frost lying on stick and stone and tree, threw back the moonlight in a million twinkling points of light, each one as brilliant as a jewel.

There was beauty on the moor, but just then came the wolf call to remind me that there was danger, too.

Down on the moor, quite a way away, I saw a man running across a patch of moonlit ground. At first I could not see what he was running from, although I could guess. The next moment I knew my guess was right because out into the same patch of moonlight sped five silver-grey streaks—wolves!

Laddie, beside me, whimpered uneasily.

"Home, boy," I said, and he licked my hand and went up. He was not a coward, but I am sure he was glad I did not want him to come with me. I would have liked his company, but it would not have been fair to take him. A dog stands no chance against a wolf in a tooth-and-nail fight.

Leaving Laddie in charge of our home, I ran down from the ledge and away across the moor. I am not so young as I was, but I am well and healthy, and can keep up a good pace for quite a long while.

I must have been running faster than any of them in front, because, presently, when I came to a piece of higher ground, I was able to see the wolves and the man in a valley below.

He was toiling up the far slope of the valley, with the beasts leaping after him. Half-way up this slope the grass ended and bare rocky ground began.



With the long drop beneath, the man turned at bay. One after the other the wolves sprang like leaping demons.

Beyond the rocky slope there rose up one giant needle of rock, and the man made for this.

"Don't go up there!" I shouted out to him, but he did not hear me, and began to climb up. My heart sank because I knew that he would be caught on the needle. The wolves would go up after him, and they were sure to catch him because the only way down was the way he was going up. The far side of the needle was straight and smooth, like the wall of a house. Right down at the bottom, as far down as I could see, there ran a rock-bottomed river, but there was no way of getting down to it, except by jumping.

And that would be a death jump!

The man was doomed! He went on climbing up and up, kicking out at all the loose rocks.

More than once all the wolves were bowled over by the tumbling rocks, but never so badly that they could not get up again and continue the chase.

I saw him begin to climb round the rock with the idea of getting down the far side, and I heard the cry of despair he gave when he saw the slippery side beneath him.

One of the wolves leapt at him, and I lost sight of him behind that silvery shape. But he fought that beast off somehow or other, and clambered up a few feet higher. He found a ledge there to stand on, and saw him standing, a dark shape against the moon.

On the ledge the other wolves sprang, like leaping demons. Three of them the man beat off with his bare hands, but the fourth beast took him unawares and got a grip with his teeth on his coat.

The man snatched it above his head and turned at bay. Another grey form streaked upwards at him, and he staggered weakly, and then fell backwards out of view behind the needle of rock.

The wolf that went with him howled in terror, and the animals who were left on the rock were suddenly silent. It was hard to believe that only a few seconds before the air had rung with the blood-mad howls of the savage brutes.

I put my hands up and covered my ears as I thought of the sharp snapping rocks striking up out of the moon-bright boulders, smiting for the falling man and beast.

Up on the needle the animals were moving uneasily to and fro and looking down the slippery side of the needle. They seemed to be getting anxious and uneasy.

"As though something is escaping them," I thought to myself.

Then it struck me that perhaps after all the man might still be alive. Calling myself a fool for not thinking of that earlier, I turned back and took a path that

he didn't care, and went past me and straight at the throat of the nearest one.

As I darted into the cave-mouth I caught a glimpse of a sudden shaking of the old man's wolf.

In the cave I put the man down on the ground, but not as gently as I should have done. I had no time to waste, because I had suddenly thought of a plan all in a flash.

I knew wolves were afraid of fire, so I began to make one in the mouth of the cave, piling up wood from a corner into a large pile. Then I lit and blew madly at the flames until it flared up. The wood crackled, and the flames spread quickly.

"Laddie, Laddie!" I called. "Here, boy, here."

From outside there came a chorus of snarls and animal cries. It was just going to my old pal's help if it was not too late, when he came leaping out of the fire through the flames and smoke.

Landing at my feet, he turned and faced the cave-mouth. He was bleeding in a dozen places, and so tired he could scarcely stand, but he growled as furiously as ever, and was ready to continue the fight.

"Good boy!" I told him, and piled up more firewood.

Of the wolves there was no sign. I guessed they were waiting up at the other end of the S passage, wondering what to do.

"Watch, Laddie," I said to my pal, and he crouched down with his head resting along his outstretched paws.

It was the attitude of sleep, but I knew that he would wake up for danger unless I told him to move.

Now was my chance to see to the man I had brought in.

By some miracle he had escaped without breaking a bone, and bruised that it would be days before he would be able to walk.

While I was examining him he came to, and looked about him wonderingly. Then suddenly remembered his name, his last words, his last moments, and he clutched at me and looked round him with a choking cry.

"It's all right," I told him. "You are quite safe here. The wolves cannot get you."

"They attacked me while I was out walking across the moor," he said. "What can I do now?"

"Outside," I told him. "But they won't attack because they are frightened of the fire."

I could not help wondering, though, what would happen when I had no more wood left in the cave to put on the fire.

After I had seen that Laddie and the man were asleep I sat and spent the long hours keeping the fire.

Beyond the fire I could see a circle of light, and knew that the wolves had crept in in the dark and were watching me. I threw a lighted brand at the gleaming circle. There was a frightened gnarling as the wolves scattered. A yelp and the smell of singed fur told me I had hit one of them.

But for all that the circle of eyes was still again a few minutes later, and not once all that night did they go away.

Slowly the new day dawned, and the man awoke. We had breakfast, and the man said he wondered if the wolves were still there. I had seen them all night, knew that we were still prisoners.

All the day I had to keep the fire going, but I was able to get a little sleep, although not so much as I would have liked, because the man's ankle was so painful that I had to keep on bathing it with water.

And so the second day passed until night-time came, and I settled down to watch the eyes of the wolves again and to think of something to get us out of our terrible position.

I alone knew that there was wood in the cave to last us for only half the next day, no food at all, and only a very little water to drink.

That night again the circle of eyes was still, and I thought of the man. I cursed at the wolves in a low voice, and threw flaming firewood after them. But what a waste it was, because they came creeping back again a moment or two later.

I gave up throwing wood at them, and just stared at them.

The smoke from the wood fire blew into my eyes and made them smart, and to ease them I sat with my eyes closed.

I must have been tired out, because unknown to myself I must have fallen asleep.

Suddenly, some time later, I woke up with a horrible feeling of danger.

The fire was almost out.

The eyes of the wolves were terribly near. It was only the last rod

embers of the fire that had stopped the creatures from springing at us and making that sleep our last sleep on all.

I flung wood on the fire and stirred the embers. Almost at once the flames shot up, and back and back went the circle of eyes as the fire drove the shadows back to the entrance of the cave.

I went to sleep no more that night, but sat and remembered how near the wolves must have been, and tried to think of some way of getting rid of them long enough to allow us to escape from the cave.

And at last I had an idea which I tried as soon as it was light and Laddie and our visitor were awake.

The ledge outside the cave ran downhill to the left, and uphill to the right, until it came to a sudden stop in mid-air. It was possible to climb over the ledge, the one below.

The main ledge and that little one below were like the top two steps of a flight of stairs, but there were no more steps below, only a sheer drop to the moor.

"I'm just going to see if the wolves are still there," I said to the man, because there was no need to tell him that I might never come back if my scheme went wrong.

Laddie whined uneasily, and tried to get in my way and stop me. He knew the wolves were still there, and hated me going.

As quietly as I could I crept along the S passage until I came to the last bend. Then I took a deep breath and jumped out on to the ledge.

The animals were there in the grey dawn light, crowding like dogs and watching the entrance. They sprang to their feet when they saw me, and before they had quite got over their surprise I had jumped clean over one of them and was racing up the ledge of rock to the right.

They came after me like lightning, and I shouted and yelled to excite them and make them chase me blindly.

There was one thing I must beware of: the animals must not catch me up.

I caught my breath, for they were getting perilously near. The ledge sloped uphill more steeply than I had thought, although I knew it well, and with every step I was moving slower and slower.

But I nerves myself for one last effort.

As the end of the ledge came nearer I spurred, and was going my fastest when I came to the edge.

I took one leap over and began to drop. My heart rose up into my mouth as I looked down and saw the second ledge. My plan was to land on that, but I had a sudden dread that I had jumped so far out that I would miss it. But I need not have worried. I landed safely on it although every bone in my body felt as though it was broken by the shock.

The next moment as I crouched on the lower ledge I looked up and saw the wolves come leaping out over the end of the top ledge.

I looked at their hairy stomachs and the underneath of their long jaws and lolling tongues as they went over me.

They in their madness had gone too far, and were dropping down beyond my second ledge.

They seemed to sense they had been tricked, and one snarled at me as he dropped helplessly past in mid-air.

They had all jumped out so far that nothing could save them.

Down and down they went, until they crashed to the ground below.

Never have I wished an animal harm or pain, but I thanked Heaven when I looked down and saw that none of them moved after their terrible fall.

Slowly I climbed back to the upper ledge and went back to the cave. I knew that the adventure was over.

When I had gathered more wood and stored water and food I went and looked at the wolves, and saw that they were wolf dogs.

I guessed that they must have strayed some time before from their homes in one of the towns on the edge of the moor, and as time had gone on had grown wild and hungry and strangely like the wolves from whom they had descended.

I buried them in one grave, and marked the spot with a pile of stones.

I can never pass that spot without thinking of the wolf call heard one night and the silvery shapes seeking their prey in the moonlight.

(From "In vast world of adventures the hermit will each week tell a tale that is sure to thrill.")

### HEAP BIG-BEEF

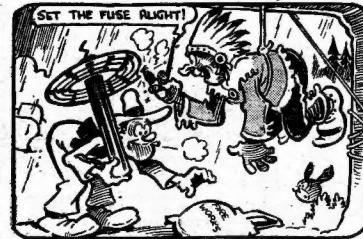
THE INDIAN CHIEF



1. As our cheery chief was toddling home one Indian Firework Thursday someone dropped him a line. "Got you, Beefy!" chirped Rube Ropem, the lass expert.



2. Rube's next move took our lad right off his feet, and he was left in suspense up a tree. "You hang up there," snarked Rube. "I'll borrow these fireworks."



3. But as it looked like rain the cowboy rigged up a game with a catherine wheel and cracker. "So long!" he piped. "Pip-pip!" Then Beefy got busy with his pipe.



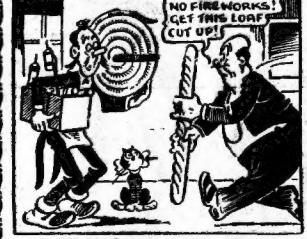
4. And in two ticks Rube was doing himself a few good turns underneath the catherine wheel. "Hee-hee! Heap big burning shame," said Beefy, burning the rope.



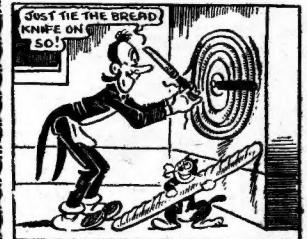
5. And off went our rollicking Redskin with his bag of fireworks, leaving Rube in a daze that last for days. "Plenty good display, cowboy!" he chuckled.

### WADDLES

THE WHIMSICAL WAITER



1. "No loafing about there with those fireworks, my lad," barked old Rissole, the boss, to Waddles, last Bonfire Day. "Get busy, and carve this loaf up at once."



2. "Suppose I'd better have a cut at it!" sighed Waddles. But so as to combine business with pleasure, he nailed up that overgrown catherine wheel on the wall.



3. "Where there's a wheel there's a way," he smiled, setting fire to it. "Just watch that knife, my dear sir—it's going to do me a few good turns, I guess!"



4. And as it whizzed round Waddles held the loaf in poshish and soon had it neatly sliced up. "Fee-hee!" squeaked Rissole. "There's a few comic cuts about this!"



5. Uncle: "Do you always blow on your tea to cool it, Tommy?"  
Tommy: "Oh no, uncle! I usually fan myself with my hat!"

### BIG BEN AND LITTLE LEN



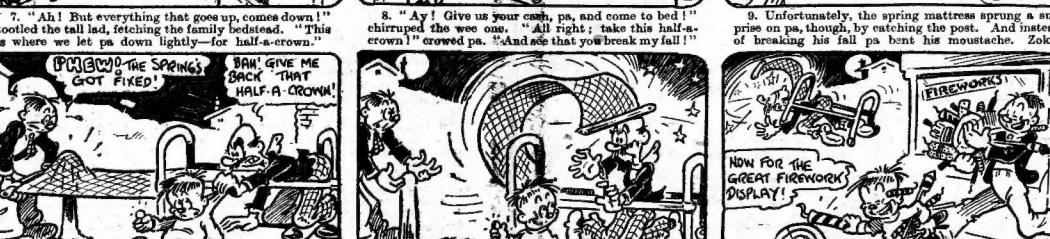
1. "Fireworks?" parped pa to our prize pair. "Bah! And pish-tush! Catch me buying such things. They're out of date!" Who said so? sniffed Little Len. "They must be," quoth pa. "Guy Fawkes used them!"



2. "Well, if that mangy old misfit won't buy us any we'll make our own fireworks brother! Tip a spot of gunpowder into this case." But pa spotted them on the job—



3. Only the sparks from this solitary sample of homemade fireworks happened to fall on the trail of gunpowder and it followed the dear old dad with a rush!



4. "Ay! Give us your cash, pa, and come to bed!" chirruped the wee one. "All right; take this half-a-crown!" crowed pa. "And see that you break my fall!"



5. "Coo! What a blow!" sighed the little 'un. But it was a bigger blow to our scheme! "Letter Cutie! Kimup, stomp!" "That cash is coming back to me now!" hooted pa, collarin' Len. "Hand over!"

### GINGER, THE "COMIC CUTS" OFFICE-BOY, GETS LEFT AT THE "POST"



1. Dear Readers—I like early hours, and was hopping off home before time when Mr. Cutie nearly saw me.



2. It would have been the sack for me if I hadn't hopped into a sackful of letters out of his sight.

### KOM TROTTER

THE JOVIAL HIKER



1. Old Farmer Fizzle was very cut-up when he spotted Tommy in the act of carving down a spot of firewood. "What do you think you're doing, eh?" he roared.



2. "Don't 'axe' me!" gasped Tommy. "But I think I'm doing a bunk—I don't like the look on your face." So saying, he did a hearty dash round and round the tree.



3. But old Fizzle followed in his footsteps, and also galloped round and round.



4. And plonking the chopper in the tree, he stepped back and watched the farmer fall over! Bonk! Just like that. "Good!" said Tommy. "Now I'll continue my trip!"



5. And off they galloped and secured a front seat at the firework show that followed. "Some guy!" chirped the lad, as the crackers made Whizbang hop.

### JOE GREASE

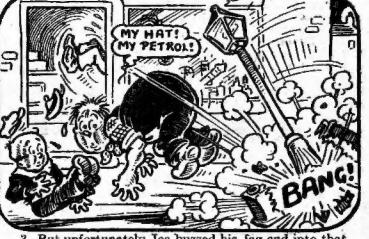
THE JOLLY GARAGE MAN



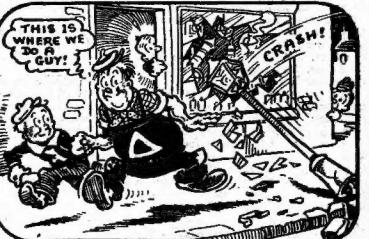
1. "Please, mister," lisped a little lad in tearful tones to jolly old Joe, "that man in there just made me pay a penny for a ha'penny cracker. I've been robbed!"



2. "Oh, did he?" snorted Joe. "Well, if I'm bigger than he is I'll show him a thing or three. Stand back, sonny—there's going to be a war on in a minute!"



3. But unfortunately Joe buzzed his fag-end into that tin of best Small petrol, and things wen't with a bang!



4. And down flopped the lamp-post through the window of old Whizbang's firework shop. "That's shed a little light on the subject," tittered Joe. "Bunk, sonny!"



5. And off they galloped and secured a front seat at the firework show that followed. "Some guy!" chirped the lad, as the crackers made Whizbang hop.

# The RED ROVERS

The Story of the latest Fun and Thrill Adventures of the famous football team, not forgetting the mascots, Uncle Joe, the parrot, and William, the almost-human monkey.



Disaster.

**I**N a dim dungeon, under a forgotten old ruin tucked away in the heart of the vast, lonely moors which stretched away to the north of Tynecastle, six of the Red Rovers paced to and fro, pausing from time to time to peer through the small openings which allowed fresh air and a little daylight to enter their gloomy prison.

Three of them—Jack Steel, Dick Turner, and Ted Nelson—had been there nearly a week, and the other three—Charlie Richardson, Jim Baker, and Fred Martin—had been there a day.

And again the lads went over the details of the amazing manner in which they had been kidnapped, trying to understand what it all meant, trying to discover who their enemies were.

The first three prisoners had been in an old car, which had broken down in a hedge just after the men had set out to walk back to Tynecastle, when, as they were passing a big clump of gorse-bushes, masked men jumped on them from behind and captured them, despite the big fight they put up.

On the following day the other three lads had been kidnapped in a somewhat similar manner when they were up to the moor searching for their lost chums.

Since then the only sign of life they had seen from outside their prison was when a stone in the roof was lifted and food and water were lowered by a masked man, who was too high for them to reach.

As far as they knew, none of the prisoners had any enemies who they thought would have gone to such lengths, and the whole affair was an utter mystery to them.

They had counted the days, and when Saturday came they wondered constantly how the first team had got on "with six of its regular members missing." As will be remembered, however, the much-weakened side had made an heroic fight, and had actually managed to draw in an away match.

Most people in Tynecastle were as mystified as the prisoners. The police had been hard at work on the case, but had obtained no clues whatever, and hundreds of amateur detectives had failed to find the answer.

Tom Armstrong and Terry Flanagan, however, had their suspicions, but they kept them to themselves. Though they had no clues to go on, they had begun to believe that at the back of the strange mystery were the eleven ex-convicts who had been signed on by the Rovers to form a side in the County Combination, a small professional league.

Mr. Falconer, the chairman of the Rovers, was chiefly responsible for signing on these men, and he had done so partly in order to give them a fresh start in life.

"Our job now is to follow Bert Brown and his ex-convict lot," said Tom, "and see if it leads us on the trail of our chaps."

## A Topping Gift-Book for Girls

Every schoolgirl will be delighted with THE POPULAR BOOK OF GIRLS' STORIES—a marvellous all-story gift-book which is illustrated by the best artists. If you want a gift that cannot fail to please you or your friends—make sure you get this jolly book.

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POPULAR BOOK OF GIRLS' STORIES



In the midst of all the noise and fun, William and the boys hopped about excitedly.

"We'll watch 'em at the ground, too," Terry said. "Their great idea was to have the free use of the ground, and now some of them have been put into the reserves, they can't be as often as they please."

During the week, however, nothing happened to help on the explanation of the mystery, and on Monday evening Brown and some of the ex-convicts were at work in the gymnasium. They finished before the other players, however, and, wishing their comrades good-night, they went along to the gate.

"That's queer!" said Tom. "I thought they would try to stay on when no one else was here, so that they could continue to search for whatever it is they are looking for."

Tom and Terry had discovered that the ex-convicts were seeking something in the ground, though the two Rovers had no idea what it could be.

"Tell you what," said Terry. "I'll nip along quietly, and see if this bunch actually do leave the ground."

"That's an idea!" exclaimed Tom. "I'll wait here for you."

The work in the gymnasium was gone on with a glancing from time to time at the doorway, watching for Terry to come back, and at length the training ended.

Instantly Tom hurried along to the dressing-rooms, to find them empty. A quick search revealed the fact that Terry's clothes were missing, and an anxious expression came into Tom's eyes.

"I hope he hasn't trailed them on his own," he said under his breath, "but it's beginning to look like it."

Presently the Rovers were dressed, and they went from the ground. After the buildings and the gates were locked.

"The mazots aren't here, either," mused Tom, thinking of Uncle Joe, the well-educated parrot, and William, the almost-human monkey.

He hurried to the lodgings he shared with Terry, hoping to find his chum there, or to discover a message from him, but Mrs. Wilson, their landlady, said Terry had not returned.

Tom was feeling very worried now, and he wished that he had not agreed so readily to his chum's proposal.

"But I didn't think anything could happen at the ground," he murmured.

Presently he left the house, and in the street he stood hesitating, wondering what to do, when suddenly he heard a familiar voice.

"One more bash on the beak from you, Billyum, and I'm goin' to call a copper," said Uncle Joe.

Tom ran to meet the mascot, hoping to find Terry with them, but the Irish lad was not there.

"Ah, mate," said Joe. "The mean microbes wouldn't give us a ride."

"What's that, uncle?" cried Tom. "What do you mean?"

"Keep your old car," that's what I says to 'em," went on the well-educated parrot. "Terry ain't a mate, leavin' us on our lonesomes."

"Oh, Tom, you could talk!" cried Terry, feeling sure that something had happened to Terry, and that the mascot knew what it was.

"Yes, you poor chump," said Joe to William. "You can't talk, you ard-baked addock."

Williams could do something else, and he did it to Joe's beak, though Tom quickly checked him.

"Where is Terry?" he cried. "Find Terry, uncle!"

It was only a faint hope, of course, and it brought no good result, for Joe had no idea where to find the Irish lad.

He continued to talk, however, in a somewhat disjointed manner, and his remarks led Tom to believe that Terry had gone somewhere in a car.

"Perhaps it's all right and I'm merrymaking for no reason," he murmured.

"Come on, Bill," said uncle. "Let's go in and get a drink of supper!"

Tom did not follow him. In his worried state of mind he felt he must keep on the move, and he went back to the ground, to find it locked up for the night.

As he stood there, glancing this way and that, he suddenly thought he heard the sound of whispered voices coming from within the enclosure, and he turned to the gate, listening intently.

Several minutes passed by, but the sound was not repeated, and he began to think that he must have imagined it.

"Perhaps Terry is back by now," he muttered.

Elbow to elbow, he climbed as he reached his lodgings, where a swift search revealed the mascot fast asleep, one of Bill's feet resting on Uncle's neck, but Terry was not indoors.

Tom hesitated no longer, but ran most of the way to the police station, where he saw the inspector and told him what had happened.

"I believe he's gone, like the others," Tom said.

The inspector took the matter up at once, telling Tom to go home to bed. The lad obeyed, but it was a long time before he fell asleep, and when he woke in the morning Terry was still missing.

Quickly Tom went to the police station, to hear that his chum had not been found.

"By gum!" he cried. "What are the police doing? Hero's seven lads been carried away, and you've done nothing to help?"

**The Fifth of November.**

"EASY, Tom," said the inspector, making allowances because he knew of the strong affection between the two chums, "we're not being quite so idle as you seem to think. As a matter of fact, we're following up a hot clue. Just take it easy for a day or so, and then I hope all will be well."

A little comforted, Tom returned home, to be met by two hideous masks which almost hid William and Uncle.

"It's the Fifth!" he muttered.

"Yes, mate, and we're going forth to see Uncle. 'WE AIN'T GOIN' TO AXE A BEANO WITH SOME OF OUR MATES!'

Tom sighed, wishing he could say something similar, but until Terry came back he thought he would never have another happy moment.

The day seemed to pass very slowly, and in the early evening commenced, and cracks and bangs began to be heard all over the place.

After trying to eat a high tea, but making a very poor job of it, Tom thought he would go to the Cosy Corner, the little teashop kept by his sweetheart, Elsie Alison.

As he went along one of the principal streets in Tynecastle, he heard sounds of uproar at the other end, where the traffic appeared to be getting into a muddle.

Quickly Tom reached the corner, in time to see policemen holding up lines of traffic in order to allow a party of boys to march along carrying a large guy in their midst.

Searched at the foot of the figure, smoking two cigarettes and wearing his top-hat and best clothes, was William.

"Where's uncle?" murmured Tom, and he quickly found out.

"Hurry along there, you boys!" ordered the police.

"Urry yourself, mate! Not so much of it!" the guy seemed to say.

"What's that?" demanded the constable, striding up to the figure, thinking that there was a boy inside.

"Out of it!"

He thrust his hand into the guy's body, and found it stuffed with straw, at which he stood in surprise.

"Stop ticklin' my mate!" came the voice of the guy.

The surprised policeman stared up, to see Uncle Joe peering out from the side of the grotesque mask.

"You leave my guy alone!" said uncle. "Ere, Bill, the copper keeps Bill in 'im!"

Off came William's top-hat and coat, and as he flung away his cigarettes, he bounded down in front of the policeman, brandishing his fists.

"Two to one on old Billyum!" shouted Tom. "That's the idea."

"Get on the move!" ordered the policeman, gazing anxiously at the rapidly lengthening streams of cars all around. "Hurry along, boys!"

Bang! Crack! Swish! Bang!

The fireworks show had suddenly commenced right in the centre of the business part of Tynecastle, for when William had flung his cigarettes, the rocket whizzed across in front of his nose. Roman candles shot coloured balls at him, golden rains flung out glittering streams, squibs, Chinese crackers, and cannon crackers exploded in volleys a jack-in-the-box shrieked like mad, pyramids made from sticks flung cascades of golden and silver sparks into the air, and coloured lights threw vivid blue, crimson, and green glares over the scene.

This box contained the fireworks, and one had been ignited by the burning cigarette, and that one set the others off.

In a few moments there was a remarkable scene at that busy crossing. Jumping crackers jumped out from the roofs of houses, and banged all around that front of the policeman, rocket whizzed across in front of his nose. Roman candles shot coloured balls at him, golden rains flung out glittering streams, squibs, Chinese crackers, and cannon crackers exploded in volleys a jack-in-the-box shrieked like mad, pyramids made from sticks flung cascades of golden and silver sparks into the air, and coloured lights threw vivid blue, crimson, and green glares over the scene.

In the midst of it all the policeman, William, and the boys hopped about excitedly, flinging over each other, and shouting loudly, whilst at

the top of the guy Uncle Joe loudly warbled the Fifth of November song.

Then, to crown it all, the guy suddenly caught alight, and the boys, William, and the policeman fled away from it, uncle staying on top until the heat forced him to quit.

A number of police hurried on to the scene, and a huge crowd collected, whilst cars and other vehicles waited in their hundreds, the drivers adding to the heat by their blistering remarks.

It will be a long time before Tynecastle forgets that Fifth of November, though uncle and William thought it was the best show they had ever attended.

Of course, the police wanted to blame someone, but they hardly knew who to start on, and they allowed the matter to drop.

Meanwhile, Terry Flanagan had joined the other Rovers in the dungeon under the old castle, and he did not know how he had got there. All he knew was that he had left the ground, following the ex-convicts, when suddenly he had received a heavy blow from behind, and when he came to he was bound and gagged in a fast-moving car.

Finally he had been lowered through the opening in the dungeon roof, and then the other prisoners had cut his bonds.

"Who brought you here, Terry?" asked Charlie Richardson eagerly.

"I don't know," replied the Irish lad. "They were masked."

Even now he could not say that the ex-convicts were to blame, for he had seen those who had been at the ground start away from it, and he had no chance to see the man who had struck him down behind.

Night came, bringing no news of his chums to Tom, and after sleeping fitfully for a few hours he went along to the police station again, his face haggard.

"Well!" he said harshly. "Has anything come of that clue?"

To his dismay the inspector shook his head slowly.

"I'm sorry, Tom," he replied. "It looked like putting us on to something good, but it petred out."

For a few moments Tom stood and stared, and then his fists clenched, and he turned away.

"You've done nothing—nothing," he said bitterly. "I'm starting now, and I'm leaving everything till I find my chum."

"What do you intend to do?" asked the inspector.

"Try something you might have tried," replied Tom. "I'd have done it yesterday if you hadn't stopped me."

"What is it?"

But Tom was already striding from the police station, and he did not pause to answer. In the street he saw an empty taxi, and he beckoned to the driver.

"Where to, boss?" asked the man.

(To be continued in next Monday's COMIC CUTS.)

## PUTTING HIM THROUGH IT!



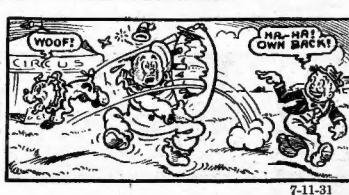
1. CORNUCLE THE CLOWN was out to make the pup practice, and SAM the dog would watch for him, until CORNUCLE told him to push off and showed him how to do it.



NOW TO THE STOOL SOME TRICKS!

WUFF?

TIE HIM TO THE STOOL!



WOOF!

HA-HA! OWN BACK!

Feeling pleased with himself about that, the clown put the pup on a stool and tied it up. "I'll look for him," he said. "Whoops a daisy, throw we go!" he cried, and did not notice Sam getting busy with the string.

# SARGA THE STRONG

A Story of People of To-day who Live Now  
Like the World Lived Two Thousand Years  
Ago. This Novel Tale is Just Starting.



The Whispering Pool.

HERE was a great celebration among the people of the hidden land inside the great belt of sea mountains. Along the shore of the inner sea, bright fires were lit, and before them were piles of fish and seal-flesh, and squatting around, the Sea Folk were feasting grandly. Seven days and nights had passed since Sarga the Strong had killed the shark, which the people called Luk, which had threatened the Sea Folk with starvation, because of its fierceness and hunger driving the seal and fish from the Sea Bowl, as this inland sea was called.

But now, Luk, the shark, was dead. Seals and fish had returned in their millions, and there was plenty for the Sea Folk.

But Sarga the Strong—although it had been he who had saved them from starvation—was not celebrating with them.

He stood apart from the feasting people, upon a lonely strip of shore. With strangely blue eyes, in contrast to the shining dark ones of the Sea Folk, gleaming with some inner excitement, he stared across the placid waters of the Sea Bowl to where four miles out, the great circular wall of black rock, towering high and smooth towards the skies, formed the impassable barrier between the land of the Sea Folk and the outer world.

And, as he stared, a rapt expression came over his fair, handsome face.

"The Sea Folk say there is no other world than this within the Black Wall," he murmured, with a soft laugh. "But I know that there must be. And the night I am going to swim the Whispering Pool and seek the Tunnel From Which None Returns. I know there are other lands outside this, and I will fight my way to them!"

He broke off his quiet musing, and swam around sharply as his keen hearing caught the sound of a soft footfall. Over the rocks towards him came the figure of a woman—Raki, his foster-mother, who had taken him from the sea when a night of storm many years ago.

Her face was sad, her dark eyes filled with foreboding as she gazed at her foster-son. Here was one whom the merry feasting of the Sea Folk had not affected.

"Always you gaze out to the Sea Bowl, my son Sarga," she said in a sombre voice. "Is it still your intention to seek the tunnel? Do not you swim with me, Raki? You can see that that strong will of yours is determined to carry you through to seek that which lies beyond the Black Walls."

Her dark eyes gazed into his lovingly. Then she smiled at him.

"You have had permission, in reward for killing Luk, the shark, to go forth and seek your adventures. It is always thus: that a mother's heart must break while her son leaves her, perhaps never to see—"

Sarga's strong arm went out, and laid his hand on Raki's.

"Hush, my dear foster mother!

I am sad at the thought of leaving you; leaving behind me many good friends among the Sea Folk. But there is something stronger even than the love I bear for you which calls me on. For you tell me that this is not my real land. That my world lies beyond the grim rocks, there in the Sea Bowl. But I will return—"

Raki laughed gently.

"Maybe, my son, maybe." Her hand went beneath her robe of skins. From a fold she produced a knife, which she handed to Sarga.

"Take this, my son. Let it be your guard against the unknown peril. It is keener than the keenest

knife among the Sea Folk, and it will guard you well!"

Sarga looked at the knife curiously, then heaved a great sigh of admiration. Indeed, as he held it lightly in his hands, it was a beautiful weapon. The hilt was carved in exquisite fashion from a curiously dull black substance, which was light, yet strong as rock. From its base a blade tapered inward in a slight, narrow curve—a blade with an appearance of greenish glass, yet which had spring and suppleness.

"You cannot break it, Sarga," Raki said seriously. "If you place the blade in a cleft of rock and try to dull its edge, or lean your whole weight on it, it will not lose its keenness, nor will it snap!"

"I know it, Raki!"

She shrugged.

"Who knows? It is so many years that it was formed. But legend says that it is made from the fang of a mighty and strange animal, such as we do not see now!"

Sarga tucked the knife into his belt. His own hand withdrew, looked at it a moment, then gravely handed it to his mother.

"This, too, is a good knife," he said. "It will be the knife which kills Luk, the shark. Keep it, mother. Let it guard you. And now, I am going! I waited here, for I knew you would come to me. Farewell, Raki!"

"Farewell, my son!"

Raki's voice was quite quiet and calm as she answered Sarga. He folded her tightly in his great muscular armament. Then he gently set her down, and without further word strode down to the edge of the sea. For long Raki watched him as he waded out, then she saw his great arms flashing in easy, rhythmic strokes as he forged steadily away from the shore of the Sea Folk.

Thus, quietly, while the rest of the Sea Folk were singing and feasting in his honour, Sarga swam his way out across the Sea Bowl in order to conquer the world.

Quickly Sarga moved through the water; as quietly and swiftly as the shark he had conquered. There was no faintest sound, nor sound of drip as, head low down in the gentle swells, he cleaved him only the faintest stain of phosphorescent bubbles, which gleamed across the skies, and died away in the darkness of the sea as if a thunder cloud had passed over them.

A fierce, uncontrollable joy made Sarga's heart swell within him as he shot through the icy waters. Their coldness could not chill the fire of adventure which burned in his heart; nor could coldness numb the giant strength of his tireless arms. His legs, which moved through the dark sea so smoothly,

overhead the stars gleamed down palely and cold, and away behind him, two miles now, the red fires that were on the shore twinkled like tiny points of a seal's eyes when a blazing torch is held before it suddenly.

After swimming steadily and tirelessly through the sea for three miles, in direct line from the shore, Sarga turned slightly westward, seeking a point under the grim overhanging walls of rock, where lay the dread Whispering Pool.

None had ever ventured within a mile of Whispering Pool save those few hardy souls who, like Sarga, had attempted to find the tunnel through the wall—and these had never returned alive to tell their story.

Whispering Pool was so called because of the curious sound which came from the point where the pool swirled—a whispering, hissing sound,



and sometimes, when the wind was high and swept over the tops even of the great rocks surrounding the Sea Folk's world, strange noise would come from the pool as of a hoarse and husky voice calling.

And now, suddenly, Sarga felt the strong pull of a current striving to drag him away in the direction of the pool, as if it was urging. But he raised his head above the water and laughed loudly, as if in mockery of such force. No sea current, no swirling rapids, was too strong for him to conquer.

He was Sarga—Sarga the Strong! The finest swimmer even the Sea Folk had ever known—and they themselves rivalled the seals and fish which they hunted.

The strong tide of the running sea washed against Sarga, bubbling

and sometimes, when the wind was high and swept over the tops even of the great rocks surrounding the Sea Folk's world, strange noise would come from the pool as of a hoarse and husky voice calling.

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Swiftly through the sea swam Sarga in his search for an underground way out of the strange land and so into the world beyond.

Swimming strongly, Sarga went straight forward, fast as a sword. His left hand stretched out straight before him for fear his speed should carry him into rock before he should chance to see it.

Something cold and hard struck his hand. A ledge of black rock glimmered before him in the green twilight. He swung back from it, allowed himself to float still higher, fighting against the current which strove to bear him away from the wall.

The pressure became less strong as he rose towards the surface. He allowed himself to rise about six feet, then he dived again, and dived again. Then he kicked out. Again the black wall. He withdrew from it, and just as he was about to kick away to let himself rise still higher, noticed that part of the ledge of rock was broken away.

He could not see very clearly from where he was, lay on the other side of the broken rock. He plunged forward, and found that the break was the lower side of an entrance through the wall.

He had found the tunnel!

Without thought of fear, without hesitation, he plunged through. And now the rush of water against him was like a solid force—no longer chopping and pulling at him in little tugs, but striving to sweep him back.

He could not open his eyes against the fury. Even his large nostrils was taxed to its utmost, to send him gurgling slowly through. There was no need for him to keep his eyes open, for the green twilight of the phosphorescence had disappeared, and here was nothing but inky

darkness, and a great coldness and solitude.

Sarga set his jaw strongly, and lowered his head so that it was level with the rest of his straight body, until his shape became what we know him to be, as rougher than before, and that the hands were curiously swarthy, and made such grab at him, as if there were a thousand different eddies and currents striving to pull him in different directions.

So near that it would take but half a dozen strokes to bring him beneath the dark shadow, was one of the flanks of the great circular wall of rock which enclosed the Sea Bowl. "It must be here that the tunnel is!" Sarga exclaimed to himself. "I must find it, and get out."

"How should the pool be just in this part? It swirls because of the force of the waters which come rushing in from outside. I will dive down inwards, and straight towards the Black Wall."

Once more he pulled himself high out of the water, and gulped deeply of the cold night air. Once, twice, thrice he drew deep breaths, then expelled the air from him. Then, finally, he gasped in a mighty lungful, and without wasting a moment, plunged his head deep into the waters and kicked out and downward powerfully.

He swooped down low, even past the point where his ear drums began to throb with the pressure of the water, until he was twenty fathoms deep. There were strange flashes of light, here in the green twilight, where the troubled waters broke into bubbles with the force of the sea which was pouring into the Sea Bowl from some hidden spot.

Where before he covered ten yards in a second, now it took him as much time to cover one. But he did not falter, nor did weakness slacken his stroke. He plunged forward and onward grimly, battling mightily.

He could hear his heart pounding in his ears above the rush of the waters sweeping by him; he could feel the blood of his chest thumping under the mighty strain. He knew his strength could last him but ten seconds longer; then his lungs must burst, unless he found a hole.

He ploughed forward another ten yards, then allowed himself to shoot towards the surface. If the water reached the roof of the tunnel, then he must surely die, as all the others had done; but if the Sea God were looking after him, then there might be a tiny opening in the tunnel.

His head broke surface. He knew an instant not of fear—for such a quality was unknown to him—but of wonderment—wondering if his head were to crash against rock. He gasped—and air rushed into his tortured lungs.

It was as if new life flowed into him! The air was cold and stale, without the freshness of the open; but it had life-giving oxygen, grateful to his lungs.

He gulped it in. He could see nothing. The tunnel was as black as pitch, broken only in occasional spots by splashes of white, where water broke over a jag of rock. He could hear nothing save the boom of the water streaming through with colossal speed.

Tired with battling against the tremendous force of it, he swam doggedly to one side of the tunnel wall, where a tiny opening in the wall he might hang for a moment to regain his strength. His hand came into contact with its hardness—wet and slippery. He fumbled with his left hand, found a round, smooth knob, on to which he might hang precariously for a little while.

He had no feeling of triumph in having got that far. He had no feeling of triumph on overrunning desire to get out of this place of evil doom and swirling rushing strength. But it did not occur to Sarga to breathe deeply and then return. Always his head was thrust forwards and onwards.

His left hand gripping the rock, he was about to continue his mighty swim when he heard above the sound of the hissing waters, a strange, sliding noise. He taunted himself into his ready to sweep out, ribbon-like, by the strength of the slide.

The sliding, slipping sound came closer. Then a thrill of sickly horror came to him. He felt something cold and wet fasten to the skin of his arm. A sliding tentacle slithered across his bare shoulder, to fasten with a sucking pull on the hand clinging to the rock.

Sarga shuddered not with fear, but with stark horror. His right hand whipped down to the skin belt, into which was thrust Raki's knife. He whipped it out and hacked swiftly at the tentacle holding him. It dropped away; but two more came in its place.

The sweat streamed from his face, even there in that coldness, as he hacked at those swift-moving, drawing tentacles. He was in the depths of Sken, the devil-hall! This guardian of the tunnel must be a mighty monster, judging from the thickness of its tentacles and the strength of its pull.

Just for one blind moment panic took Sarga and weakened his stout heart. Before he gleamed a solitary pale eye and a fleshy, hooked beak as Sken arose from the deep waters to pull his victim down. Tentacle after tentacle wrapped around Sagan. And then paws left him, and took in a deep breath and prepared to fight for his life against the mightiest and most evil of all the dangerous underwater creatures.

(To be continued in next Monday's COMIC CUTS.)

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# PLUM AND DUFF

AND THE BOYS OF THE BOLD BRIGADE



1. It was the fine Firework Fifth, but not very fine for Plum and Duff, 'cos old Sarge scooped up their collection of squibs and rockets and so forth. "None of these here, my lads," he tootled. "You might knock the paint off the camp."



2. And highly pleased with his seventeen stone self for what he'd done, Suet gave himself a pat on the back, and forming fours he marched off to drill the troops. "Aha! Exit the villain of the piece," piped Plum. "What about it, chum?"



3. And galloping up a rocket of the large mine-popper kind, the comical kids cruised round to where Sarge was doing his stuff with the other Bold Brigadiers. "Now then!" he bellowed. "When I give the word, jump to it! Wait for it! Wait for it!"



4. But the troops refused to wait, for Plum and Duff let loose the rocket and made them rise to the occasion before Sarge gave the order. "Tee-hee! There's an uprising in the army to-day," tittered Duff. "And it's not 'leep' year either!"



5. But there were some good points about the gallant lads of the awkward squad, and these same points kept them much in suspense when they stuck in the wooden roof above. "They are hanging around all right, touch wood," cackled Plum.



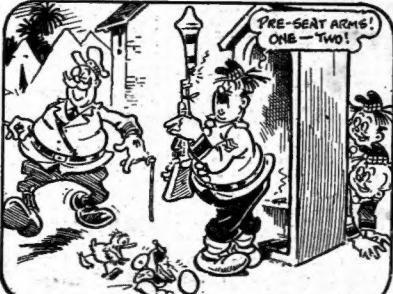
6. Then up galloped Colonel Bogey, the big chief and head big noise of the brigade. And he rushed up in a hurry and a nasty temper, too! "How dare you put my army up to such silly stunts?" he barked to Suet. "You go and do sentry-go!"



7. Thus was old Three-stripes handed a job of work to do, but, as usual, he didn't think it mattered. "It's too much fag," he sniffed. "I'll have a fag instead." And he lit up, while the larky lads swopped another rocket for the rifle-bayonet.



8. However, old Bogey appeared in the offing, lightly tripping on his way with all the grace of an elephant hopping from twig to twig of a peanut bush. "Corks! The b-goy-man!" gasped Suet. "I must pass out a salute to the old warrior!"



9. And not noticing that his match had set fire to the rocket in the rifle, Suet presented arms in the style approved of by the big guns of the army. "Pass friend and all's well," he chirped. "This way out of the camp. First on the left, sir!"



10. Then Sarge got badly left. Yes, the rocket and the rifle departed on an aerial trip, and left him empty-handed. "Ah! Caught you red-handed without a rifle, have I?" snorted the colonel. "Where's your gun, my man? Speak! Answer me!"



11. And by way of an answer, the rifle came down again and caught the old choddrop a nice fourpenny wallop on the snout. "There's the rifle, sir!" chirped the kids. "See it?" "Corks!" wailed Suet. "It's made its presence felt!"



12. And the result of it was that Bogey got an outside in headaches, and Suet got seven days in the cells. He deserved more, but the colonel promised to let him out for next week if he was a good boy. Still, he made a good guy for the lads!